


SUMMER program guide



on-line reservation SYSTEM

 The Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department is pleased to announce the launch of the long awaited on-line reservation system! The reservation system will allow you to take a virtual tour of the campsites, view the specifications AND reserve your favorite campsite from the comfort of your home computer or laptop on the go. Book your reservation today at...

maricopacountyparks.org



Maricopa County

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Phoenix, AZ 85004
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www.maricopa.gov/parks

[www.twitter.com/MCParks](https://twitter.com/MCParks)

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ABOUT US

From hiking on a barrier-free trail, to horseback riding along a creek, Maricopa County Parks offer visitors the best of the Sonoran Desert. At approximately 120,000 acres, Maricopa County is home to one of the largest regional park system in the United States. All trails within the Maricopa County Park System are for non-motorized use only. Ten parks in the system circle the metropolitan area and all are within a 45-minute drive from downtown Phoenix.

- Adobe Dam Regional Park
- Buckeye Hills Regional Park
- Cave Creek Regional Park
- Desert Outdoor Center
- Estrella Mountain Regional Park
- Lake Pleasant Regional Park
- McDowell Mountain Regional Park
- San Tan Mountain Regional Park
- Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area
- Utery Mountain Regional Park
- White Tank Mountain Regional Park

Vision: Our vision is to connect people with nature through regional parks, trails and programs, inspire an appreciation for the Sonoran desert beauty and natural open spaces, and create life-long positive memories.

Mission: Our mission, through responsible stewardship, is to provide the quality parks, trails, programs, services and experiences that energize visitors and create life-long users and advocates.

PARK PROGRAMS

Experienced Interpretive Rangers take visitors on guided hikes to explore the ruins of Native American Hohokam, interpret the art chipped onto rocks known as petroglyphs and learn about the native wildlife. Maricopa County Parks offer visitors a variety of guided hikes at no additional cost. Whether you're interested in kayaking, mountain biking, adventure hikes or taking your children on a Toddler Cruise, Parks offers programming opportunities for everyone. For a complete listing of events at each park, visit the website at www.maricopa.gov/parks and click on the "Events" link.

SAFETY TIPS

Here are some helpful tips to ensure you have a safe and enjoyable experience at the park:

- Always hike or ride with a buddy or group
- Stay on designated trails
- Keep your dog on a leash at all times
- Be mindful and respectful of others – use proper trail etiquette

- Dress in comfortable hiking/riding attire
- Carry plenty of water with you and drink it regularly – you can still get dehydrated in the cooler weather
- Get a map to help guide you along the way
- and know where you are going
- Tell someone where you are going and when you plan to be back
- Understand and follow the park rules before setting out on a hike or ride
- Check weather reports prior to heading out
- Carry a first aid kit with you

PARK HIGHLIGHTS



National Public Lands Day

September 24 • 7 a.m. - 12 p.m.

The annual National Public Lands Day is back! Lake Pleasant Regional Park will be looking for volunteers to help with shoreline and underwater clean-up efforts as well as other park projects. This is the nation's largest hands-on volunteer event with over 170,000 people volunteering at 2,086 public land sites in all 50 states!!

maricopa.gov/parks/lake_pleasant

ANIMALS

JUNE

25 Reptile Feeding – 10 a.m. Have you ever seen a reptile eat? Join the staff after your morning hike and see how our cold-blooded residents eat their meals for yourself! Frozen rodent entrees will be served to the critters. Come learn about the important roles these creatures play in our dynamic food web. Feeding takes place at the Nature Center. *Parks: Cave Creek Regional Park*

Venomous Arizona-A Survivor's Guide – 10 a.m. We live in the most venomous state in the union! We'll tell you what to look out for, how to prevent incidents, what to do if they happen and just some interesting facts about our toothy, toxic critters! It's all in the air-conditioned Nature Center. This info could really save your life! *Park: Estrella Mountain Regional Park*

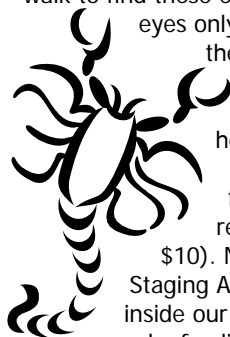
Surviving the Bite - Desert Animals – 2 p.m. Enjoy a cool escape from the heat of the desert inside our air conditioned visitor center and watch this exciting movie on our huge projector screen. But this is no ordinary movie theater. You are encouraged to bring snacks/lunch, pillows/blankets and make yourself super comfy. Our resident animals love movie day and will be outstanding company as they watch the movie with you, from inside their enclosures of course. *Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park*

Venomous Creatures – 2 p.m. Join us for a presentation about the venomous creatures you may find around the Valley! Enjoy the beauty of these wonderful and misunderstood animals while learning about fascinating facts and the important roles each creature plays in the desert ecosystem. As Marie Curie, French Physicist and two-time Nobel Prize recipient said "Nothing in life is to be feared. It is only to be understood." Meet at Nature Center. *Parks: Cave Creek Regional Park*

All About Scorpions - Evening "Brown-Bag It" with Ranger B - 6:30 p.m. How dangerous are scorpions? How can we protect ourselves from them? How do they survive and thrive in our desert? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about scorpions, then this one-hour presentation is for you! Bring your sandwich to the "Brown-Bag It" series inside our Nature Center as Ranger B shares some amazing facts about these desert dwellers. Location: Nature Center. Watch us feed our snakes after the program at 7:30pm. Then join our "Scorpion Hunt" at

8pm at no extra cost! *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

Scorpion Hunt – 8 p.m. Did you know that scorpions glow in the dark under a blacklight? Join Ranger B as he leads us on this fun and safe night walk to find these elusive desert dwellers (using our eyes only). You will learn cool facts about these amazing creatures and sharpen your spotting skills! All ages will enjoy this casual one-hour/one-mile walk. Wear closed-toe shoes and bring water and a flashlight (blacklights are recommended and are for sale for \$10). No pets, please. Location: Trail Staging Area. Join our scorpion program inside our Nature Center at 6:30pm, and our snake feeding at 7:30pm at no extra cost! *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*



29 Itsy Bitsy Spiders And BIG Ones Too – 9 a.m. Join us as we introduce the kids to the biggest spider they have ever seen and her buddy, the Giant Desert Hairy Scorpion we call Conan. We'll talk about spiders, have a bug song and story book to sing along to and then make funny spider hats. Coloring pages to bring home for the kids and information about bites and stings to keep your kids safe. We will feed the critters their yummy crickets too. *Park: Estrella Mountain Regional Park*

30 Wildlife Safari – 8 a.m. We all love to see wild animals, but where are they hiding this time of year? Join us on this exciting 1.5-mile wildlife safari as we sneak to the secret places where the park's wildlife is often seen. Feel free to bring your camera and binoculars. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Location: Trail Staging Area. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

Scorpion Scavenger Hunt at Night – 8 p.m. Join us for a tantalizing 1-mile hike to explore the wondrous desert life at night. Using a special black light, we will search for one of the true giants of the desert... the Giant Desert Hairy Scorpion. See its fluorescent glow under the black light and learn fascinating facts about these magnificent creatures, as well as other night life critters. Bring plenty of water, proper hiking attire, and a flashlight (black lights also encouraged, but are optional). Black lights will be available to rent at the visitor center. *Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park*

JULY

01 All About Coyotes - Evening "Brown-Bag It" with Ranger B – 7 p.m.

What makes coyotes one of America's most successful animals? How dangerous are they? How do they survive and thrive in the wild? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about coyotes, then this one-hour presentation is for you! Bring your sandwich to the "Brown-Bag It" series inside our Nature Center as Ranger B shares some amazing facts about these crafty canines. Location: Nature Center. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

02 Snake Feeding – 12 p.m. Come and meet our 6 foot long gopher snake (Persephone). She is very friendly and will be glad to greet the kids. Learn all about the gopher snake's secret weapon and other fun snake facts. Meet our King snake (Elvis) as well. We will show you how to recognize a venomous snake, how to avoid them and what to do if you are bitten which is quite rare. We will feed both during this program-not for the squeamish. Hands-on activities for all. Follow signs to the air-conditioned, accessible Nature Center. *Park: Estrella Mountain Regional Park*

All About Roadrunners - Evening "Brown-Bag It" with Ranger B - 6:30 p.m. What makes roadrunners such unique birds? How do they survive and thrive in the desert? Do they really eat snakes? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about roadrunners, then this one-hour presentation is for you! Bring your sandwich to the "Brown-Bag It" series inside our Nature Center as Ranger B shares some amazing facts about these rapid runners. Location: Nature Center. Watch us feed our snakes after the program at 7:30pm. Then join our "Animal Hide & Seek Flashlight Walk" at 8pm at no extra cost! *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

Animal "Hide and Seek" Flashlight Walk - 8 p.m. We are the nocturnal animals of the desert and we like to hide. Help Ranger B find us if you can! If you would like to learn about us and enjoy a night walk in the desert, then join Ranger B as he takes you on this exciting 1-mile/1-hour walk along the Merkle Trail. The Merkle Trail offers universal access and the hard-smooth surface of this trail will accommodate wheelchairs and strollers. Please bring water, a flashlight, and closed-toe shoes. No pets, please. Location: Area 6. Join our "All About Roadrunners" program inside our Nature Center at 6:30pm, and our snake feeding at 7:30pm at no extra cost! *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

07 Going Batty - Bat Observation Hike - 7 p.m. This is a rare opportunity to observe our resident bats as they wake up and get ready for a big night of batting around the desert. Learn all about these fascinating creatures, and just how important they are to have around. This will be a short 1.5 mile hike starting promptly at 7p.m. at the Goldmine Trailhead, located off of Skyline Drive and Wagon Wheel Road. For more information call 480-655-5554 *Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park*

08 All About Venomous Insects - "Brown-Bag It" with Ranger B – 12 p.m. A tarantula hawk? A velvet ant? A giant centipede? Do these things really live around here? How dangerous are they? How do they survive and thrive in the desert? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about venomous insects, then this one-hour presentation is for you! Bring your sandwich to the "Brown-Bag It" series inside our Nature Center as Ranger B shares some amazing facts about these creepy critters. Location: Nature Center. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

09 Tiny Tumbleweed Trekking: Birds! - 9 a.m. Tiny Tumbleweed Treks are geared towards our Valley's youngest hikers and nature lovers! Come to the Nature Center and learn about some of the birds that live here with us! After a short lesson indoors, we will hit the trail on a short hike in search of wildlife clues. Meet inside the Nature Center. *Park: Cave Creek Regional Park*

All About Butterflies - "Brown-Bag It" with Ranger B – 12 p.m. What are the different kinds of butterflies that live in our area? How do they survive and thrive in the desert? Where are the best places to find them? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about butterflies, then this one-hour presentation is for you! Bring your sandwich to the "Brown-Bag It" series inside our Nature Center as Ranger B shares some amazing facts about these colorful creatures. Location: Nature Center. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

Lunch With The Arachnids – 12 p.m. We will feed our tarantula and scorpion their yummy crickets, but they may not eat them right away. Meet at Nature Center and learn to love creepy crawlers! Bites and stings safety



information for parents, coloring pages for kids. We'll

even make the scorpion glow for you! *Park: Estrella Mountain Regional Park*

Creature Feature: Hoot! - 2 p.m. We will be hosting a special presentation followed by a popular animated film. This family event is designed for all ages. An interpretive program will explore the fascinating world of owls which inhabit our beautiful desert and give you the opportunity to get up close and personal with these beautiful creatures. The program will conclude with a family friendly movie presentation depicting the life of owls who empower you to make a difference for some burrowing owls threatened by development (not unlike many of the owls here in AZ). Feel free to bring a mat, pillow, blanket or sleeping bag! Concessions will be available for purchase in the nature center; however you are welcome to bring your own food and beverages - no glass containers please. Meet inside the Nature Center. *Park: Cave Creek Regional Park*

"Venomous Reptiles" with Reptile Expert, Cale Morris – 7 p.m. Join reptile expert, Cale Morris, from the Phoenix Herpetological Society for this exciting presentation of live venomous reptiles! Cale will be bringing several different rattlesnakes and a gila monster with him. Bring your curiosities and questions to Usery Park and discover lots of cool things about these rockin' reptiles! Location: Nature Center. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

All About Scorpions – 7 p.m. What has 8 legs, 2 pinchers, and glows under ultraviolet light? That's right, scorpions. Learn about the facts, myths and reputation behind these mysterious creatures during a short presentation in the Visitor Center. Once you have learned all about scorpions you will be ready to meet them face to face on an exciting Scorpion Scavenger Hunt starting at 8p.m. for no additional charge. *Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park*

Scorpion Scavenger Hunt – 9 p.m. Join us for a tantalizing 1-mile hike to explore the wondrous desert life at night. Using a special black light, we will search for one of the true giants of the desert... the Giant Desert Hairy Scorpion. See its fluorescent glow under the black light and learn fascinating facts about these magnificent creatures, as well as other critters of the night. Bring plenty of water, proper hiking attire, and a flashlight (black lights also encouraged, but are optional). Black lights will be available to rent at the visitor center through the Friends of San Tan. *Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park*

13 Animal Action Relay Race For Kids – 9 a.m. Join the Ranger as we capture the kid's imaginations with a fun race where the kids imitate animals. Being in nature

stimulates the brain and imagination of your child. Being in nature will elevate your mood as well. Come on out, get some fresh air and fun in the park. It's the best thing you can do for your child and yourself! This is at the air-conditioned, accessible Nature Center. *Park: Estrella Mountain Regional Park*

15 All About Owls - "Brown-Bag It" with Ranger B – 12 p.m. What makes owls so different from other birds? Which owls live in our area? How do they survive and thrive in our desert? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about owls, then this one-hour presentation is for you! Bring your sandwich to the "Brown-Bag It" series inside our Nature Center as Ranger B shares some amazing facts about these rockin' raptors. Location: Nature Center. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

16 Breakfast with the Tortoises - 8 a.m. It's breakfast time in Tortoise Town, and our 5 tortoises want you to join them for a very special meal. During this meal you will have the opportunity feed, meet, and learn more about our tortoises. Feel free to pack a breakfast or enjoy the light refreshments provided. Refreshments are limited and will be handed out on a first-come first-serve basis, donations are welcomed. (Please, no sharing of human food with the tortoises) *Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park*

River Walk With Microbiology – 8 a.m. This is a shady cool stroll along the river. We will look at tracks in the sand, invasive species, big birds and look at the microscopic life in the water. Easy walk for kids but lots of sand so don't bring strollers. Wear a hat and bring water. Follow signs to the Overflow Parking lot east of the turf area. *Park: Estrella Mountain Regional Park*

Talk with the Animals – 9 a.m. When was the last time you sat and had a conversation with some desert animals? Come join Ranger Adam at the Visitor Center and get as close as you can (safely) to snakes, scorpions, spiders, lizards, and tortoises. This will be an open house style program where guests are welcome to come and go as they please and participate in fun crafts, ask questions, take photos and even touch a reptile. *Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park*



Reptile Feeding - 11 a.m. Have you ever seen a reptile eat? Join the staff after your morning hike and see how our cold-blooded residents eat their meals for yourself! Frozen rodent entrees will be served to the critters. Come learn about the important roles these creatures play in our dynamic food web. Feeding takes place at the Nature Center. *Park: Cave Creek Regional Park*

All About Venomous Insects - "Brown-Bag It" with Ranger B – 12 p.m. A tarantula hawk? A velvet ant? A giant centipede? Do these things really live around here? How dangerous are they? How do they survive and thrive in the desert? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about venomous insects, then this one-hour presentation is for you! Bring your sandwich to the "Brown-Bag It" series inside our Nature Center as Ranger B shares some amazing facts about these creepy critters. Location: Nature Center. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

Venomous Creatures - 2 p.m. Join us for a presentation about the venomous creatures you may find around the Valley! Enjoy the beauty of these wonderful and misunderstood animals while learning about fascinating facts and the important roles each creature plays in the desert ecosystem. As Marie Curie, French Physicist and two-time Nobel Prize recipient said "Nothing in life is to be feared. It is only to be understood." Meet at Nature Center. *Park: Cave Creek Regional Park*

Bug Theater For Families – 7 p.m. We will be creating our own movie screen of live bugs! Join the Ranger and bug expert, James Waters of ASU, as we light up the night and see what creepy crawlies want to come visit us. Even if you parents don't like 'em, kids LOVE bugs. Why not enjoy a picnic dinner and then go to the Nature Center with comfortable chairs, flashlights and go easy on the bug spray!! Bug guides for everyone and important information for parents on bites and stings. *Park: Estrella Mountain Regional Park*

23 All About Scorpions - Evening "Brown-Bag It" with Ranger B - 6:30 p.m.

How dangerous are scorpions? How can we protect ourselves from them? How do they survive and thrive in our desert? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about scorpions, then this one-hour presentation is for you! Bring your sandwich to the "Brown-Bag It" series inside our Nature Center as Ranger B shares some amazing facts about these desert dwellers. Location: Nature Center. Watch us feed our snakes after the program

at 7:30pm. Then join our "Scorpion Hunt" at 8pm at no extra cost! *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

Scorpion Hunt – 8 p.m. Did you know that scorpions glow in the dark under a blacklight? Join Ranger B as he leads us on this fun and safe night walk to find these elusive desert dwellers (using our eyes only). You will learn cool facts about these amazing creatures and sharpen your spotting skills! All ages will enjoy this casual one-hour/one-mile walk. Wear closed-toe shoes and bring water and a flashlight (blacklights are recommended and are for sale for \$10). No pets, please. Location: Trail Staging Area. Join our scorpion program inside our Nature Center at 6:30pm, and our snake feeding at 7:30pm at no extra cost! *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*



26 All About Venomous Insects - "Brown-Bag It" with Ranger B – 12 p.m.

A tarantula hawk? A velvet ant? A giant centipede? Do these things really live around here? How dangerous are they? How do they survive and thrive in the desert? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about venomous insects, then this one-hour presentation is for you! Bring your sandwich to the "Brown-Bag It" series inside our Nature Center as Ranger B shares some amazing facts about these creepy critters. Location: Nature Center. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

27 All About Mountain Lions - "Brown-Bag It" with Ranger B – 12 p.m.

Just how dangerous are mountain lions? What should you do if you encounter one? How do they survive and thrive in our desert? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about mountain lions, then this one-hour presentation is for you! Bring your sandwich to the "Brown-Bag It" series inside our Nature Center as Ranger B shares some amazing facts about these elusive cats. Location: Nature Center. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

28 Kids Are For The Birds! – 9 a.m.

Bird watching is the main reason people go out in nature and it is a lifelong hobby you can do anywhere, anytime. Join the Ranger as we capture the kids imaginations with a fun hide and seek game with birds designed by Arizona Audubon. Bring a wooden clipping clothespin and we will have the kids make a quail call too. Being in nature stimulates the brain and imagination. Come on out, get some fun in the park. It's the best thing you can

do for your child and yourself. *Park: Estrella Mountain Regional Park*

29 All About Bees - "Brown-Bag It" with Ranger B – 12 p.m. How important are bees to humans? How can we bee safe around them? How do bees survive and thrive in our desert? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about bees, then this one-hour presentation is for you! Bring your sandwich to the "Brown-Bag It" series inside our Nature Center as Ranger B shares some amazing facts about these buzzing busybodies. Location: Nature Center. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

Scorpion Scavenger Hunt - 8:30 p.m. Join us for a tantalizing 1-mile hike to explore the wondrous desert life at night. Using a special black light, we will search for one of the true giants of the desert... the Giant Desert Hairy Scorpion. See its fluorescent glow under the black light and learn fascinating facts about these magnificent creatures, as well as other critters of the night. Bring plenty of water, proper hiking attire, and a flashlight (black lights also encouraged, but are optional). Black lights will be available to rent at the visitor center through the Friends of San Tan. *Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park*

AUGUST

06 Reptile Feeding – 10 a.m. Have you ever seen a reptile eat? Join the staff after your morning hike and see how our cold-blooded residents eat their meals for yourself! Frozen rodent entrees will be served to the critters. Come learn about the important roles these creatures play in our dynamic food web. Feeding takes place at the Nature Center. NOTE: This program is part of the "County Parks are getting Wet 'n' Wild this summer" series and we will be raffling off a family-four pack at the end of the program. *Park: Cave Creek Regional Park*

Venomous Creatures – 1 p.m. Join us for a presentation about the venomous creatures you may find around the Valley! Enjoy the beauty of these wonderful and misunderstood animals while learning about fascinating facts and the important roles each creature plays in the desert ecosystem. As Marie Curie, French Physicist and two-time Nobel Prize recipient said "Nothing in life is to be feared. It is only to be understood." Meet at Nature Center. NOTE: This program is part of the "County Parks are getting Wet 'n' Wild this summer" series and we will be raffling off a family-four pack at the end of the program. *Park: Cave Creek Regional Park*

11 Wildlife Safari – 8 a.m. We all love to see wild animals, but where are they hiding this time of year? Join us on this exciting 1.5-mile wildlife safari as we sneak to the secret places where the park's wildlife is often seen. Feel free to bring your camera and binoculars. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Location: Trail Staging Area. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

Parks and Barks at Night – 7 p.m. Dogs are man's best friend for a reason..... they are great hikers and love the outdoors. So bring out your friend for a dog friendly hike through the park. Please bring a leash, plenty of water, and a happy dog for this 1.3 mile, round trip, hike in the beautiful Sonoran Desert. *Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park*

All About Packrats - Evening "Brown-Bag It" with Ranger B – 7 p.m. Why are packrats so fascinating and funny? Do they really collect things? How do they survive and thrive in the desert? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about packrats, then this one-hour presentation is for you! Bring your sandwich to the "Brown-Bag It" series inside our Nature Center as Ranger B shares some amazing facts about these rascally rodents. Location: Nature Center. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

All About Rattlesnakes - "Brown-Bag It" with Ranger B – 12 p.m. How dangerous are rattlesnakes? What should you do if you encounter one? How do they survive and thrive in our desert? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about rattlesnakes, then this one-hour presentation is for you! Bring your sandwich to the "Brown-Bag It" series inside our Nature Center as Ranger B shares some amazing facts about these misunderstood reptiles. Location: Nature Center. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*



Home School - Going Batty - 9:30 a.m. Are you part of a home school group or looking for a great place to take your kids for a fun and educational field trip? Well San Tan Mountain Regional Park is a great place to bring those inquisitive minds. Enjoy a short nature hike in the beautiful Sonoran Desert, followed by brief talk focusing on the bats of Arizona, and we will end it all with a special animal visitor the kids can meet. *Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park*

17 All About Roadrunners - "Brown-Bag It" with Ranger B – 12 p.m.

What makes roadrunners such unique birds? How do they survive and thrive in the desert? Do they really eat snakes? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about roadrunners, then this one-hour presentation is for you! Bring your sandwich to the "Brown-Bag It" series inside our Nature Center as Ranger B shares some amazing facts about these rapid runners. Location: Nature Center. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

19 All About Lizards - Evening "Brown-Bag It" with Ranger B – 6 p.m.

What are the different kinds of lizards that live around here? How do they survive and thrive in our desert? Where are the best places to spot them? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about lizards, then this one-hour presentation is for you! Bring your sandwich to the "Brown-Bag It" series inside our Nature Center as Ranger B shares some amazing facts about these rapid reptiles. Location: Nature Center. Watch us feed our snakes after the program at 7pm. Then join our "Animal Hide & Seek Flashlight Walk" at 7:30pm at no extra cost! *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

Animal "Hide and Seek" Flashlight Walk - 7:30 p.m. We are the nocturnal animals of the desert and we like to hide. Help Ranger B find us if you can! If you would like to learn about us and enjoy a night walk in the desert, then join Ranger B as he takes you on this exciting 1-mile/1-hour walk along the Merkle Trail. The Merkle Trail offers universal access and the hard-smooth surface of this trail will accommodate wheelchairs and strollers. Please bring water, a flashlight, and closed-toe shoes. No pets, please. Location: Area 6. Join our "All About Lizards" program inside our Nature Center at 6pm, and our snake feeding at 7pm at no extra cost! *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

20 Tiny Tumbleweed Trekking: Bugs! – 9 a.m. Tiny Tumbleweed Treks are geared towards our Valley's youngest hikers and nature lovers! Come to the Nature Center and learn about some of the bugs that live here with us! After a short lesson indoors, we will hit the trail on a short hike in search of these tiny creatures. Meet at Nature Center. *Park: Cave Creek Regional Park*

All About Packrats - "Brown-Bag It" with Ranger B – 12 p.m. Why are packrats so fascinating and funny? Do they really collect things? How do they survive and thrive in the desert? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or

any questions you may have about packrats, then this one-hour presentation is for you! Bring your sandwich to the "Brown-Bag It" series inside our Nature Center as Ranger B shares some amazing facts about these rascally rodents. Location: Nature Center. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

Scorpion Hunt - 7:30 p.m.



Did you know that scorpions glow in the dark under a blacklight? Join Ranger Kevin as he leads us on this fun and safe night walk to find these elusive desert dwellers (using our eyes only). You will learn cool facts about these amazing creatures and sharpen your spotting skills!

All ages will enjoy this casual one-hour/one-mile walk. Wear closed-toe shoes and bring water and a flashlight (blacklights are especially helpful). No pets please.

There will be a drawing for a free set of passes to the Wet n' Wild Water Park at the end of this program. *Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area*

Scorpion Scavenger Hunt - 7:30 p.m. Join us for a tantalizing 1-mile hike to explore the wondrous desert life at night. Using a special black light, we will search for one of the true giants of the desert... the Giant Desert Hairy Scorpion. See its fluorescent glow under the black light and learn fascinating facts about these magnificent creatures, as well as other critters of the night. Bring plenty of water, proper hiking attire, and a flashlight (black lights also encouraged, but are optional). Black lights will be available to rent at the visitor center through the Friends of San Tan. *Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park*

25 All About Bald Eagles - "Brown-Bag It" with Ranger B – 12 p.m.

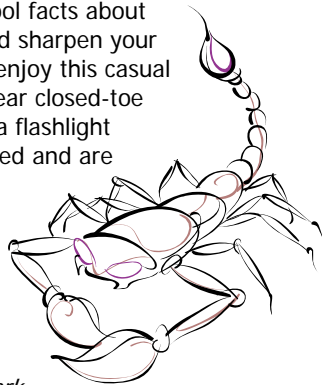
Where do bald eagles live around here? Why are they the national symbol of America? How do they survive and thrive in the wild? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about bald eagles, then this one-hour presentation is for you! Bring your sandwich to the "Brown-Bag It" series inside our Nature Center as Ranger B shares some amazing facts about these beautiful birds. Location: Nature Center. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

27 Reptile Feeding – 10 a.m. Have you ever seen a reptile eat? Join the staff after your morning hike and see how our cold-blooded residents eat their meals for yourself! Frozen rodent entrees will be served to the critters. Come learn about the important roles these creatures play in our dynamic food web. Feeding takes place at the Nature Center. *Park: Cave Creek Regional Park*

Venomous Creatures – 2 p.m. Join us for a presentation about the venomous creatures you may find around the Valley! Enjoy the beauty of these wonderful and misunderstood animals while learning about fascinating facts and the important roles each creature plays in the desert ecosystem. As Marie Curie, French Physicist and two-time Nobel Prize recipient said "Nothing in life is to be feared. It is only to be understood." Meet at Nature Center. *Park: Cave Creek Regional Park*

All About Scorpions - Evening "Brown-Bag It" with Ranger B – 6 p.m. How dangerous are scorpions? How can we protect ourselves from them? How do they survive and thrive in our desert? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about scorpions, then this one-hour presentation is for you! Bring your sandwich to the "Brown-Bag It" series inside our Nature Center as Ranger B shares some amazing facts about these desert dwellers. Location: Nature Center. Watch us feed our snakes after the program at 7pm. Then join our "Scorpion Hunt" at 7:30pm at no extra cost! *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

Scorpion Hunt - 7:30 p.m. Did you know that scorpions glow in the dark under a blacklight? Join Ranger B as he leads us on this fun and safe night walk to find these elusive desert dwellers (using our eyes only). You will learn cool facts about these amazing creatures and sharpen your spotting skills! All ages will enjoy this casual one-hour/one-mile walk. Wear closed-toe shoes and bring water and a flashlight (blacklights are recommended and are for sale for \$10). No pets, please. Location: Trail Staging Area. Join our scorpion program inside our Nature Center at 6pm, and our snake feeding at 7pm at no extra cost! *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*



AQUATICS

AUGUST

06 In, On, Around, Above Lake Pleasant – 11 a.m. Frank will share information about the wide variety of activities in which to participate at and near Lake Pleasant. Come join Frank anytime between 11 AM and 2 PM. *Park: Lake Pleasant Regional Park*

09 Talking Fishing with Frank – 11 a.m. Stop by between 11 AM and 2 PM and hear the great stories of Frank's fishing experience. Frank will share information about fishing, especially for those without watercraft *Park: Lake Pleasant Regional Park*

23 Talking Fishing with Frank – 11 a.m. Stop by between 11 AM and 2 PM and hear the great stories of Frank's fishing experience. Frank will share information about fishing, especially for those without watercraft *Park: Lake Pleasant Regional Park*

30 Talking Fishing with Frank – 11 a.m. Stop by between 11 AM and 2 PM and hear the great stories of Frank's fishing experience. Frank will share information about fishing, especially for those without watercraft *Park: Lake Pleasant Regional Park*

ARCHAEOLOGY & HISTORY

JUNE

22 Ancient Stones Petroglyph Hike - 8 a.m. - We will take an easy walk up a nearby hill that has a small petroglyph site. Learn about the peoples who lived in the area before Europeans arrived. It's really fascinating history. Bring water, hats and hiking shoes. Follow signs to the Gila Trail. This hike is about a mile with some elevation. We'll be done before it's hot. *Park: Estrella Mountain Regional Park*

JULY

01 Hohokam Houses - the Ruins of Spur Cross – 7 a.m. Join us for this 2.5 mile hike that will introduce you to the rich archaeological history of the area. See evidence of prehistoric Hohokam dwellings and learn about their culture as we trek on up to one of their mesa compounds. *Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area*

ASTRONOMY

JUNE

24 Sunset Over Spur Cross - 6 p.m. Come with us on a casual stroll along the Metate Trail as the sun sets over the hills of the conservation area. The twilight is a prime time to watch for wildlife and take pictures so bring some binoculars and a camera. *Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area*

Stories of the Sky - San Tan - 8 p.m. Enjoy a cool escape from the heat of the desert inside our air conditioned visitor center and watch this exciting movie on our huge projector screen. But this is no ordinary movie theater. You are encouraged to bring snacks/lunch, pillows/blankets and make yourself super comfy. Our resident animals love movie day and will be outstanding company as they watch the movie with you, from inside their enclosures of course. *Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park*

25 Sunset Stroll - 7:30 p.m. Relax, on this wonderful evening journey through the desert as the sun slowly sinks behind the mountaintops for the night. Take in the beautiful scenery as the clouds put on a vibrant show with transitioning colors of pink, gold and violet. Listen for the wildlife as they awaken for their nightly rounds. Allow your eyes to wander and senses to be invigorated as our ranger guides you on a 1.3-mile stroll along the Littleleaf and Goldmine Trails. The hike is relatively mild with a few small hills. Flashlights are recommended, but optional. *Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park*

JULY

01 Dark Sky Telescope Hike - 7 p.m. My usual telescope guy, Steve Dermer, is ill so I have stand-in astronomer Ed Szeremet who will bring a telescope which will be set up to look at the Saturn and other deep space objects.



This is a great cheap date, besides being a fun night hike. The hike is a rugged, slight elevation 1.2 miles out to the telescope and .8 mi easy Coldwater access road back. Follow signs to the Toothaker Trail west of the rodeo arena. Bring water, FLASHLIGHTS, walking sticks, good shoes. Clouds cancel telescope, rain cancels hike but check website 1/2

hr before event to see. *Park: Estrella Mountain Regional Park*

15 Full Moon Hike - "Full Buck Moon" - 8 p.m. Join us for this 2.5-mile night hike under July's "Full Buck Moon." The full moon is a great time to experience new sights and sounds of the desert! Bring your sense of adventure for this fun, interpretive hike. Please bring water, a flashlight, and closed-toe shoes. No pets, please. Location: Trail Staging Area. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

Full Moon Hike - 8 p.m. The Conservation Area is a different experience when seen softly illuminated by the silver moon. While we will attempt to minimize the use of flashlights, bring one in case you need it. *Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area*

Full Moon Hike - 8 p.m. Discover the beauty of the Sonoran Desert at night, as we hike under the light from the full moon. Join us for a pristine 1.3-mile stroll along the Stargazer Trail. Listen for the sounds of wildlife and explore the night-life atmosphere. The pace of the hike will be relatively mild or slow to help enjoy the surroundings. Flashlights are welcomed. *Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park*

09 Mountain Bike in the Moonlight - 7:30 p.m. The 2011 Schedule is available for this summer's Mountain Bike by the Moon Light summer night ride series. This is the only night ride in the Phoenix area organized by a land manager to get mountain bikers out during the hot summer months. This ride will be on the Competitive Track. It is a great idea to pre-ride the competitive track before the night ride. Helmets and lights will be mandatory on this ride. Only lights designed for use with mountain bikes with at least a 3 hour power source are acceptable. All riders must sign in and out at the trailhead as they start and finish their ride. Everyone needs to be off the trail by 9:30 PM. This is not a guided ride. Volunteers will sweep the course to ensure all riders return safely. For more information call 480-471-0173. RIDERS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO START THEIR RIDE AFTER 8pm. *Park: McDowell Mountain Regional Park*

16 Moonlight Hike: Clay Mine - 7:30 p.m. Join us on an amazing and mysterious adventure as we enter our Clay Mine at night! This will be an easy 1 mile hike as we have the moon light the way to the mine. Once inside, candles will bring us through the history of this mine and will learn how its contents were used to cure all your ailments. Bring water and a flashlight in case you need it. We will supply the helmets to enter the mine as long as you wear sturdy shoes. Meet at

the Group Campground. *Park: Cave Creek Regional Park*

30 Mountain Bike in the Moonlight - 7:30 p.m. The 2011 Schedule is available for this summer's Mountain Bike by the Moon Light summer night ride series. This is the only night ride in the Phoenix area organized by a land manager to get mountain bikers out during the hot summer months. Most of the rides will be on the Pemberton Trail which is not very technical; however, night riding will make it more difficult. Helmets and lights will be mandatory on this ride. Only lights designed for use with mountain bikes with at least a 3 hour power source are acceptable. All riders must sign in and out at the trailhead as they start and finish their ride. Everyone needs to be off the trail by 9:30 PM. This is not a guided ride. Volunteers will sweep the course to ensure all riders return safely. For more information call 480-471-0173. **RIDERS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO START THEIR RIDE AFTER 8pm.** *Park: McDowell Mountain Regional Park*

AUGUST

12 Family Moonlight Walk - Spur Cross - 7 p.m. Spur Cross is a different experience when seen softly illuminated by the silver moon. Come and join Ranger Kevin for an easy stroll along the Metate Trail. While we will attempt to minimize the use of flashlights, bring one in case you need it. There will be a drawing for a set of free passes to the Wet n' Wild Water Park at the end of this program. *Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area*

Moonlight Hike: Michelin Man by Moonlight! - 7:30 p.m. Come experience the desert at its most spectacular: by moonlight! As the sunset sweeps over us, the moon will meet us above the hills. We will enjoy a 2-mile roundtrip hike along the Slate Trail, which is rocky, but relatively flat. Please, no dogs. Meet at Slate Trailhead. *Park: Cave Creek Regional Park*

Mountain Bike in the Moonlight - McDowell - 7:30 p.m. The 2011 Schedule is available for this summer's Mountain Bike by the Moon Light summer night ride series. This is the only night ride in the Phoenix area organized by a land manager to get mountain bikers out during the hot summer months. Most of the rides will be on the Pemberton Trail which is not very technical; however, night riding will make it more difficult. Helmets and lights will be mandatory on this ride. Only lights designed for use with mountain bikes with at least a 3 hour power source are acceptable. All riders must

sign in and out at the trailhead as they start and finish their ride. Everyone needs to be off the trail by 9:30 PM. This is not a guided ride. Volunteers will sweep the course to ensure all riders return safely. For more information call 480-471-0173. **RIDERS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO START THEIR RIDE AFTER 8pm.** *Park: McDowell Mountain Regional Park*

13 All About Space - 6 p.m. Orbiting around the sun is a tiny sphere surrounded by planets, moons and rings, dropping into a seemingly endless universe. Yet for this miniscule spec, the right conditions have come together and life thrives on our little blue planet. As we look into the night sky one might ask, "Are we alone?" Join us at the visitor center for an out of this world experience as we talk "All About Space." *Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park*

Adults Only Full Moon Hike - 7:30 p.m. The Conservation Area is a different experience when seen softly illuminated by the silver moon. While we will attempt to minimize the use of flashlights, bring one in case you need it. No children under 16 please. *Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area*

Full Moon Hike - 7:30 p.m. Join us for this 2.5-mile night hike under August's "Full Red Moon." The full moon is a great time to experience new sights and sounds of the desert! Bring your sense of adventure for this fun, interpretive hike. Please bring water, a flashlight, and closed-toe shoes. No pets, please. Location: Trail Staging Area. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

Full Moon Hike - 7:30 p.m. Discover the beauty of the Sonoran Desert at night, as we hike under the light from the full moon. Join us for a pristine 2.2 mile stroll along the Stargazer Trail. Listen for the sounds of wildlife and explore the night-life atmosphere. The pace of the hike will be relatively mild or slow to help enjoy the surroundings. Flashlights are welcomed. *Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park*

24 Hiking in the Dark - 7:30 p.m. Discover the beauty of the Sonoran Desert at night in complete darkness. Enjoy a sky filled with shining stars as the mountains provide the perfect retreat from the city lights, on this peaceful 2.2-mile stroll along the Stargazer Trail. Listen for the sounds of wildlife and explore the night-life atmosphere. The pace of the hike will be relatively mild or slow to help enjoy the surroundings. Fun for all ages. Please bring a flashlight, water and closed toed shoes. *Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park*

ENTERTAINMENT & SOCIAL SKILLS

JUNE

21 **Tales from the White Tanks – 9 a.m.** Hear stories of the mysteries and magic of White Tank Mountain Park as presented by Joyce Story, renowned story teller. Come to the Nature Center at 2 pm. This will be great for kids and adults alike. *Park: White Tank Mountain Regional Park*

23 **Summer Movie Day- "The Living Desert" – 10 a.m.** Enjoy a cool escape from the heat of the desert inside our air conditioned visitor center and watch this exciting movie on our huge projector screen. But this is no ordinary movie theater. You are encouraged to bring snacks/lunch, pillows/blankets and make yourself super comfy. Our resident animals love movie day and will be outstanding company as they watch the movie with you, from inside their enclosures of course. *Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park*

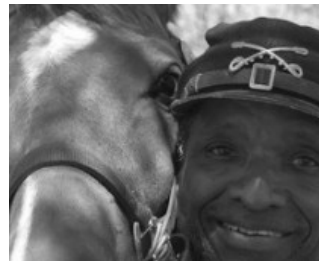
24 **"Just for Kids" - Story Time in the Desert - 10:30 a.m.** Kids (including parents and grandparents) will learn about our desert through fun stories, games, and a short nature walk. Feel free to bring a picnic lunch to enjoy after the program. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Location: Nature Center. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

JULY

02 **Intro to Archery – 7:30 a.m.** Interested in archery? Curious about how to shoot a bow and arrow? Come to San Tan Mountain Regional Park and find out! You will discover how fun archery really is! Participants will experience a fun and safe introduction to recreational and international-style target archery. Equipment will be provided. This program is open to anyone ages 8 and up. Minors must be accompanied by an adult. Advanced registration is required. Please call Ranger Adam at 480-655-5554 to register. Limited to 20 participants. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Meet at the Visitor Center. *Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park*

Meet A Buffalo Soldier – 9 a.m. A member of this highly decorated and hard fighting group will ride out of the past and into the park today. Their little known history is a fascinating one and will be told by

re-enactor Herb Petty. Learn a little more about the western progression of our country on this birthday weekend. Follow signs to the rodeo arena.



HERB PETTY BIOGRAPHY While living and working on Long Island, New York I had very little knowledge about the "Buffalo Soldiers". Grade schools never mentioned anything about Afro-Americans

in our military. After retiring as a law enforcement officer from the State of New York and moving to Arizona, I learned the real story of how Afro-Americans served in the United States Army and played a big part in the settlement of the West. I was fortunate to meet a group of men living here in AZ that had worked with Danny Glover in the movie, "Buffalo Soldiers". After the movie, these individuals developed educational re-enactment groups and did presentations to inform the public of the impact Afro-Americans had while serving our country during the 1800's. I felt very much like being a part of this and purchased a horse, uniform, boots and a saddle. I joined the Arizona 10th cavalry. I've enjoyed sharing and educating the public about the heroic role Afro-Americans played in the United States Army even at a time when discrimination and racism were the normal course of events. I also learned that the American Indians gave the Afro-American troopers the name "Buffalo Soldier" based on their hair, endurance, speed and fighting spirit which was similar to that of the bison they were so familiar with. I look forward to visiting parks, libraries and other public events to share the history and stories of how Afro-Americans served so honorably during that period. *Park: Estrella Mountain Regional Park*

16 **In, On, Around, Above Lake Pleasant – 11 a.m.** Frank will share information about the wide variety of activities in which to participate at and near Lake Pleasant. Come join Frank anytime between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. *Park: Lake Pleasant Regional Park*

07 **Creature Feature – Movies in the Park - 1:30 p.m.** Families, are you looking for something cool to do this summer? Grab a mat, pillow, or blanket, and spend the afternoon watching a movie on a giant screen inside our cool Nature Center! Every Thursday in July we will feature a different animal movie at 1:30pm. The movies are family-friendly and fun for all ages. A short ranger-led nature program that ties into the movie will also be provided. Concessions will be

available for purchase, however you are welcome to bring your own food and beverages – no glass containers, please. In today's movie: "Lassie", a beautiful collie faces incredible challenges to find her way back home. But how will she do it? Come to Usery Park and find out! Location: Nature Center.

Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park

14 Creature Feature – Movies in the Park - 1:30 p.m. Families, are you looking for something cool to do this summer? Grab a mat, pillow, or blanket, and spend the afternoon watching a movie on a giant screen inside our cool Nature Center! Every Thursday in July we will feature a different animal movie at 1:30pm. The movies are family-friendly and fun for all ages. A short ranger-led nature program that ties into the movie will also be provided. Concessions will be available for purchase, however you are welcome to bring your own food and beverages – no glass containers, please. In today's movie: "Black Beauty", we will watch the life story of a horse – from the horses' point of view! Location: Nature Center. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

21 Creature Feature – Movies in the Park - 1:30 p.m. Families, are you looking for something cool to do this summer? Grab a mat, pillow, or blanket, and spend the afternoon watching a movie on a giant screen inside our cool Nature Center! Every Thursday in July we will feature a different animal movie at 1:30pm. The movies are family-friendly and fun for all ages. A short ranger-led nature program that ties into the movie will also be provided. Concessions will be available for purchase, however you are welcome to bring your own food and beverages – no glass containers, please. In today's movie: "The Living Desert", you will see desert animals do things you never thought possible – like scorpions dancing! This real-life Disney movie is both educational and highly entertaining. Laughter is guaranteed! Location: Nature Center. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

22 "Just for Kids" - Story Time in the Desert - 1:30 p.m. Kids (including parents and grandparents) will learn about our desert through fun stories, games, and a short nature walk. Feel free to bring a picnic lunch to enjoy after the program. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Location: Nature Center. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

23 National Cowboy Day Kids Program – 8 a.m. Yippee-ti-yi-yo it's National Cowboy Day! So round up the little buckeroos and rodeo queens and get down to the park. We will have the kids try their hand at some

cowboy skills-and Mom and Dad too! It's harder to throw a lariat than you might think but we will teach you how and maybe a bit of trick roping. A real Arizona working cowboy, Gayland Lockridge, will show you his cowboy gear and tell a few (tall) tales from his days on the range. We'll have a horse to teach the basics of horse care to the kids. Blaze a trail to the shady Navy area. Entertainment/Social Activities *Park: Estrella Mountain Regional Park*

Wacky Wildlife Water Day – 9 a.m. Looking for a cool way to cool off? Enjoy a refreshing assortment of water activities at the park, while learning about some of the special animals of the desert. Don't forget to bring a towel, because you will get soaked. Sunscreen and appropriate sun attire is encouraged. Don't forget to stay after to check out our wildlife critters and cool down inside the Visitor Center. *Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park*

28 Creature Feature – Movies in the Park - 1:30 p.m. Families, are you looking for something cool to do this summer? Grab a mat, pillow, or blanket, and spend the afternoon watching a movie on a giant screen inside our cool Nature Center! Every Thursday in July we will feature a different animal movie at 1:30pm. The movies are family-friendly and fun for all ages. A short ranger-led nature program that ties into the movie will also be provided. Concessions will be available for purchase, however you are welcome to bring your own food and beverages – no glass containers, please. In today's movie: "Alvin and the Chipmunks – the Squeakquel", the chipmunk gang continues to get their way at Dave's house, however, now they have stiff competition from some girl chipmunks. What's going to happen? Come to Usery Park and find out! Location: Nature Center. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

AUGUST

03 Summer Movie Day- San Tan – 10 a.m. Enjoy a cool escape from the heat of the desert inside our air conditioned visitor center and watch TWO exciting movies on our huge projector screen. But this is no ordinary movie theater. You are encouraged to bring snacks/lunch, pillows/blankets and make yourself super comfy. Our resident animals love movie day and will be outstanding company as they watch the movie with you, from inside their enclosures of course. *Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park*

Summer Movie – 2 p.m. Enjoy a cool escape from the heat of the desert inside our air conditioned visitor center and watch TWO exciting movies on our huge projector screen. But this is no ordinary movie

theater. You are encouraged to bring snacks/lunch, pillows/blankets and make yourself super comfy. Our resident animals love movie day and will be outstanding company as they watch the movie with you, from inside their enclosures of course. *Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park*

05 Night Bike Rides First Fridays - 7:30 p.m. Estrella Mountain Cyclery and Estrella Trails Club are collaborating to present this series. Night riding is totally different and not just because it's cooler! This self-guided ride is meant to be fun, but it's not for beginners. Do laps on the easier Jr. Loop (1.6 mi) and keep it close to the parking lot or challenge yourself with the more lengthy and difficult Long Loop (9.5 mi). Be smart, check the trail out in daylight before riding it at night. Start between 6:30-8pm and finish no later than 8:30pm. Bring bike, shoes, helmet, 2 hrs of water, night light (bikes, lights, etc for rent at www.estrellamountaincyclery.com 623-925-1352) The light should have at least a 3 hour power source...hiking back to the car is a possibility! Check in and out but ride on your own. Both tracks will be swept at 9:30pm to be sure all have finished safely. SKILL LEVEL: Night riding is a bit more difficult than daytime when you can see where you are going. The Jr. Loop is fairly easy but the Long Loop does have some technical features and involves some climbs. It's really not a ride for beginners. Bike Track near PIR. *Park: Estrella Mountain Regional Park*



06 In, On, Around, Above Lake Pleasant – 11 a.m. Frank will share information about the wide variety of activities in which to participate at and near Lake Pleasant. Come join Frank anytime between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. *Park: Lake Pleasant Regional Park*

20 Creature Feature: Charlotte's Web – 2 p.m. Escape the heat by watching a family friendly movie in the park's Nature Center. We will be hosting a special presentation followed by a popular animated film. This family event is designed for all ages. An interpretive program will explore the fascinating world of the javelinas and arachnids and give you the opportunity to get up close and personal with the special creatures. The program will conclude with a family friendly movie presentation depicting the life of spider, Charlotte, who helps her pig friend, Wilbur. Feel free to bring a mat, pillow, blanket or sleeping

bag! Concessions will be available for purchase in the nature center; however you are welcome to bring your own food and beverages - no glass containers please. Meet inside the Nature Center. *Park: Cave Creek Regional Park*

24 "Just for Kids" - Story Time in the Desert – 11 a.m. Kids (including parents and grandparents) will learn about our desert through fun stories, games, and a short nature walk. Feel free to bring a picnic lunch to enjoy after the program. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Location: Nature Center. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*



26 Bike Ride at Night – 7 a.m. Enjoy a soothing bike ride under the light from the stars, on the Goldmine, San Tan, and Hedgehog Trails (roughly 5.7 miles loop). Helmets and lights (designed for mountain biking with at least a three hour power source) will be mandatory on this ride. All riders must sign-in and out at the trailhead as they start and finish their ride. Everyone needs to be off the trail by 9:00 p.m. This is not a guided ride. Volunteers will sweep the course to ensure all riders return safely. *Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park*

Movie Night in the Park: "The Living Desert" – 7 p.m. Come see the best film ever made about our desert animals! All ages will love this exciting movie on the giant screen inside our air-conditioned Nature Center. You will see desert animals do things you never thought possible – like scorpions dancing! This real-life Disney movie is both educational and highly entertaining. Laughter is guaranteed! Feel free to bring snacks and drinks with you (no glass bottles), otherwise, concessions are available inside our Nature Center. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

Monsoon Madness- Water Day – 9 a.m.



Looking for a cool way to cool off? Enjoy a refreshing assortment of water activities at the park, while learning about some of the special animals of the desert. Don't forget to bring a towel, because you will get soaked. Sunscreen and appropriate sun attire is encouraged. Don't forget to stay after to check out our wildlife critters and cool down inside the Visitor Center as we watch Planet Earth's Freshwater. *Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park*

27 Summer Movie Day- Planet Earth: Freshwater – 11 a.m.

Enjoy a cool escape from the heat of the desert inside our air conditioned visitor center and watch this exciting movie on our huge projector screen. But this is no ordinary movie theater. You are encouraged to bring snacks/lunch, pillows/blankets



and make yourself super comfy. Our resident animals love movie day and will be outstanding company as they watch the movie with you, from inside their enclosures of course. *Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park*

30 Desert Mythbusters - "Brown-Bag It" with Ranger B – 12 p.m.

Are rattlesnakes really dangerous? Can you drink water from a cactus? Do "jumping cactus" really jump? Do the arms of a saguaro help to keep it balanced? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about our desert, then this one-hour presentation is for you! Bring your sandwich to the "Brown-Bag It" series inside our Nature Center as Ranger B busts some myths about the desert. Location: Nature Center. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

GEOLOGY

JUNE

21 Tales from the White Tanks – 9 a.m.

Hear stories of the mysteries and magic of White Tank Mountain Park as presented by Joyce Story, renowned story teller. Come to the Nature Center at 2 pm. This will be great for kids and adults alike. *Park: White Tank Mountain Regional Park*

JULY

13 "Just for Kids" - These Rocks Rock!! – 1:30 p.m.

Kids, do you like rocks? Want to find out the names of the different rocks? Want to discover what they are made of and how they were made? Come to Usery Park and find out! Geologist AJ Lombard will teach you some cool things about the rocks you will find in Arizona. This indoor program is designed for kids ages 7 and up. Location: Nature Center. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

23 Rock Art of Spur Cross – 7 a.m.

The petroglyphs found in Spur Cross were created hundreds of years ago by the Hohokam people. Come and walk in their footsteps as we visit a few of the more impressive sites in the park during this two-hour hike. No dogs on this hike please. *Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area*

Geology Rocks Your World! – 11 a.m.

Geologist Joe Ford will take us through billions of years of history in a few short minutes. This is an fun program for the whole family with an interest in rockin' out. The Geology of Arizona and the Estrellas is fascinating. Come to the air-conditioned Nature Center for a fun lesson from our own Mr. Wizard. Great for homeschoolers. *Park: Estrella Mountain Regional Park*

Let Us Rock Your World- Geology For Kids – 11 a.m.

We will have Mr. Science, Larry Ford, show the kids in a very fun way what rocks are, how they form and how important to us they are. We will have some fun hands on that will Rock Your World! Meet at the air-conditioned, accessible Nature Center. *Park: Estrella Mountain Regional Park*

30 Nature Walk at Spur Cross – 7 a.m.

Join interpretive ranger Kevin Smith for a nature walk through the diverse habitats of Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area. Learn about the ecology of the Sonoran desert and spend an enjoyable 2 hours of hiking slowly and enjoying nature. We encourage you to bring binoculars if you have them. *Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area*

AUGUST

06 Hohokam Houses - the Ruins of Spur Cross – 7 a.m.

Join us for this 2.5 mile hike that will introduce you to the rich archaeological history of the area. See evidence of prehistoric Hohokam dwellings and learn about their culture as we trek on up to one of their mesa compounds. *Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area*

19 Rock Art of Spur Cross – 7 a.m.

The petroglyphs found in Spur Cross were created hundreds of years ago by the Hohokam people. Come and walk in their footsteps as we visit a few of the more impressive sites in the park during this two-hour hike. No dogs on this hike please. *Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area*

20 **"Geology of Arizona" with Professor AJ Lombard – 7 p.m.**
Ever wonder about the fascinating mountains and rock formations seen throughout Arizona? Join geology professor, A. J. Lombard, as he shares a wealth of information about the unique geology of Arizona in this one-hour presentation. Bring your curiosities and questions inside our Nature Center and discover lots of amazing things about our state's incredible geology! Location: Nature Center.
Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park

27 **Exploring the Dragonfly Trail – 7 a.m.** Come along with park ranger Kevin Smith on this exploration of the newest trail in the Spur Cross trail system, the Dragonfly Trail. On this moderate 3.5 mile hike we will visit a prehistoric rock art site and also stroll along a beautiful section of riparian habitat on Cave Creek.
Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area

HEALTH & FITNESS

JUNE

Every Mon, Tues, Thurs, Sat – Yoga – Connect in Nature! – All Levels Class – Beginners Welcome

Connect with nature in Usery Park's Nature Center by exploring your breath before a desert hike. Improve your balance for a bike ride through easy-to-learn, fundamental yoga postures. This all-levels class for both beginners and experienced yogis sets the tone for your day of hiking, riding or...yes, even your workday! Please join Inner Vision Yoga and their certified instructors for inspiring yoga every Monday night at 6pm, Tuesday and Thursday at 9am, and Saturday at 8:30am. Sign up for these fee-based classes at www.innervisionyoga.com or drop into the park. For more information see websites, or call 480-632-7899 or 480-984-0032. Location: Nature Center
Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park

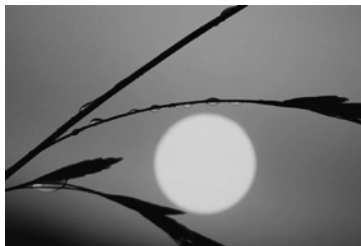
15 **It's A Beautiful Morning Hike – 6 a.m.** Self-guided hike. Watch the sun rise on our beautiful desert. This 3 mi loop trail is open to the dawn and is especially good at making you feel you are the first person on earth. It has some elevation which we will take slow. We'll return on a flat trail that was a stagecoach route to the Butterfield Overland Stage that ran just south of the Estrella Mountains. Follow signs to Butterfield Trail east of the Rodeo Arena. *Park: Estrella Mountain Regional Park*

17 **Exploring Spur Cross – 7 a.m.** Join park ranger Kevin Smith for a 2-hour introductory exploration of Spur Cross. From its Hohokam prehistory and historic gold mining to the romantic days when Spur Cross meant vacation from a saddle, we explore the wonders of Spur Cross.
Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area

18 **Exploring the Dragonfly Trail - 7 a.m.** Come along with park ranger Kevin Smith on this exploration of the newest trail in the Spur Cross trail system, the Dragonfly Trail. On this moderate 3.5 mile hike we will visit a prehistoric rock art site and also stroll along a beautiful section of riparian habitat on Cave Creek.
Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area

23 **"Beat the Heat" Fitness Hike - 7:30 a.m.** Once a month, Usery Park offers a fitness hike to promote health and fitness. On this brisk 3-mile/1-hour hike along the scenic Blevins Trail, we will elevate our heart rates and build our muscle groups. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Meet at the Trail Staging Area.
Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park

25 **Sunset Stroll - 7:30 p.m.** Relax, on this wonderful evening journey through the desert as the sun slowly sinks behind the mountaintops for the night. Take in the beautiful scenery as the clouds put on a vibrant show with transitioning colors of pink, gold and violet. Listen for the wildlife as they awaken for their nightly rounds. Allow your eyes to wander and senses to be invigorated as our ranger guides you on a 1.3-mile stroll along the Littleleaf and Goldmine Trails. The hike is relatively mild with a few small hills. Flashlights are recommended, but optional. *Park: San Tan Regional Park*



JULY

Every Mon, Tues, Thurs, Sat – Yoga – Connect in Nature! – All Levels Class – Beginners Welcome – 8:30 a.m. Connect with nature in Usery Park's Nature Center by exploring your breath before a desert hike. Improve your balance for a bike ride through easy-to-learn, fundamental yoga postures. This all-levels class for both beginners and experienced yogis sets the tone for your day of hiking, riding or...yes, even your

workday! Please join Inner Vision Yoga and their certified instructors for inspiring yoga every Monday night at 6pm, Tuesday and Thursday at 9am, and Saturday at 8:30am. Sign up for these fee-based classes at www.innervisionyoga.com or drop into the park. For more information see websites, or call 480-632-7899 or 480-984-0032. Location: Nature Center Park: *Usery Mountain Regional Park*

09 **Sunrise On The Desert Hike – 6 a.m.** Join the Ranger on as we watch the sun rise on our beautiful desert. This 3 mile medium skill loop trail is especially good at making you feel you are all alone and away from the rushing crowd. It has some elevation which we will take slow. We'll return on a flat trail that was a stagecoach route to the Butterfield Overland Stage that ran just south of the Estrella Mountains. Follow signs to Butterfield Trail east of the Rodeo Arena. Park: *Estrella Mountain Regional Park*

15 **New To Arizona – 12 p.m.** Join the ranger to learn about the bites and stings to watch out for, how to prepare for hiking in the heat, how to keep pets safe, and anything else that a person newly arrived in the desert might like to know. Meet in the accessible Nature Center-it's air-conditioned which is the first step to surviving the summer in AZ! Park: *Estrella Mountain Regional Park*

30 **Healthy Morning Hike – 6 a.m.** This is a fun 2.5 mi Baseline Trail hike the family can enjoy. Some elevation at the start will get your heart pumping but it's mostly flat. We'll try and go at a healthy pace with a stop to look at the fantastic view of the valley. This is a great hike that you can do quickly, get the benefits of exercise with the added value of desert beauty and tranquility. Bring water, hats, good hiking shoes, walking stick. Follow signs to Gila/Baseline Trailhead south of the turf area. Park: *Estrella Mountain Regional Park*

AUGUST

Every Mon, Tues, Thurs, Sat – Yoga – Connect in Nature! – All Levels Class – Beginners Welcome – 8:30 a.m. Connect with nature in Usery Park's Nature Center by exploring your breath before a desert hike. Improve your balance for a bike ride through easy-to-learn, fundamental yoga postures. This all-levels class for both beginners and experienced yogis sets the tone for your day of hiking, riding or...yes, even your workday! Please join Inner Vision Yoga and their certified instructors for inspiring yoga every Monday night at 6pm, Tuesday and Thursday at 9am, and

Saturday at 8:30am. Sign up for these fee-based classes at www.innervisionyoga.com or drop into the park. For more information see websites, or call 480-632-7899 or 480-984-0032. Location: Nature Center Park: *Usery Mountain Regional Park*

04 **It's A Beautiful Morning Hike- Estrella – 6 a.m.** Join the Ranger as we watch the sun rise on our beautiful desert. This 3 mile medium skill loop trail is especially good at making you feel you are all alone and away from the rushing crowd. It has some elevation which we will take slow. We'll return on a flat trail that was a stagecoach route to the Butterfield Overland Stage that ran just south of the Estrella Mountains. This is a Healthy Avondale Hike. Follow signs to Butterfield Trail east of the Rodeo Arena. Park: *Estrella Mountain Regional Park*

26 **Sunset Over Spur Cross – 5:30 p.m.** Come with us on a casual stroll along the Metate Trail as the sun sets over the hills of the conservation area. The twilight is a prime time to watch for wildlife and take pictures so bring some binoculars and a camera. Park: *Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area*

OUTDOOR SKILLS

JUNE

25 **Summer Hiking Safety 101 at White Tank Park – 10 a.m.** Learn about being safe in the desert during the summer season. There are lots of other dangers other than the heat so be prepared. Class will be held in the Nature Center at 10:00 am. A \$6 fee is collected per family for the class. This will get you in to the Park after the class. Park: *White Tank Mountain Regional Park*

Great American Backyard Campout – 3 p.m. Join REI and Lake Pleasant for a fun camping overnight! Lake Pleasant and REI have partnered up on a full line-up of activities, food and fun! All you need to do is show up! Registration opens May 6th online at www.rei.com/paradisevalley and will close June 4th. Campers are encouraged to attend the pre-camp meet and greet at the REI Paradise Valley store on June 13th. Saturday night dinner, Sunday morning breakfast, park entry fees, campsite fees, and activities are ALL INCLUDED! However, if you wish to participate in the moonlight paddle on June 25th, you must provide your own watercraft. To rent a kayak, contact Scorpion Bay Marina at 928-501-7368 to reserve today! Questions about the event, contact

Laura Carr at 602-996-5400 or email at lcarr@rei.com. Questions about Lake Pleasant, contact Anna Esh 602-372-7460 x 210 or email annaesh@mail.maricopa.gov. Parks: Lake Pleasant Regional Park

Great American Backyard Campout –

3 p.m. Join REI and Lake Pleasant for a fun camping overnight! Lake Pleasant and REI have partnered up



on a full line-up of activities, food and fun! All you need to do is show up! Registration opens May 6th online at

www.rei.com/paradisevalley and will close June 4th. Campers are encouraged to attend the pre-camp meet and greet at the REI Paradise Valley store on June 13th. Saturday night dinner, Sunday morning breakfast, park entry fees, campsite fees, and activities are ALL INCLUDED! However, if you wish to participate in the moonlight paddle on June 25th, you must provide your own watercraft. To rent a kayak, contact Scorpion Bay Marina at 928-501-7368 to reserve today! Questions about the event, contact Laura Carr at 602-996-5400 or email at lcarr@rei.com. Questions about Lake Pleasant, contact Anna Esh 602-372-7460 x 210 or email annaesh@mail.maricopa.gov. Parks: Lake Pleasant Regional Park

27 Boy Scouts of America Lake Pleasant Camp - Session 4 -8:30 a.m.

Where in the Valley of the Sun can you learn to canoe, kayak, row, motorboat, water ski, wake board, sail and fish all in one place? The Lake Pleasant Aquatics and Nature Camp, that's where! The Boy Scouts of America has teamed up with Maricopa County's Desert Outdoor Center to host an annual summer camp for boy scouts from all over the Phoenix- Metro Valley area. It may be hot on land, but scouts can stay cool while they earn aquatic merit badges, some of which are not offered anywhere else in Arizona. When it's time to get off the lake, scouts can retreat from the blistering summer sun into an air-conditioned education center and continue to earn nature merit badges, such as Reptile & Amphibian Study, Insect Study, Environmental Study, Archeology, Geology, or even First Aid or Cooking!

This provisional day camp runs Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Cost for camp is \$215 per scout with bus pick-up available around the Valley for an additional fee. For more information, please call Natalie Harper at (602)372-7470 x209, or register

online at www.grandcanyonbsa.com. Park: Desert Outdoor Center at Lake Pleasant.

29 All About Desert Survival - "Brown-Bag It" with Ranger B - Usery Park – 12 p.m.

What would you do if your car breaks down or you get lost while hiking? Would you know how to survive if you were stranded in the desert? What are the most important things to do to stay alive? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about desert survival, then this one-hour presentation is for you! Bring your sandwich to the "Brown-Bag It" series inside our Nature Center as Ranger B shares some life-saving tips on how to survive in the desert. Location: Nature Center. Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park

JULY

01 Night Bike Rides First Fridays – 7:30 p.m.

Estrella Mountain Cyclery and Estrella Trails Club are collaborating to present this series. Night riding is totally different and not just because it's cooler! This self-guided ride is meant to be fun, but it's not for beginners. Do laps on the easier Jr. Loop (1.6 mi) and keep it close to the parking lot or challenge yourself with the more lengthy and difficult Long Loop (9.5 mi). Be smart, check the trail out in daylight before riding it at night. Start between 6:30-8pm and finish no later than



8:30pm. Bring bike, shoes, helmet, 2 hrs of water, night light (bikes, lights, etc for rent at www.estrellamountaincycler.com 623-925-1352) The light should have at least a 3 hour power source... hiking back to the car is a possibility! Check in and out

but ride on your own. Both tracks will be swept at 9:30pm to be sure all have finished safely. SKILL LEVEL: Night riding is a bit more difficult than daytime when you can see where you are going. The Jr. Loop is fairly easy but the Long Loop does have some technical features and involves some climbs. It's really not a ride for beginners. Bike Track near PIR. Park: Estrella Mountain Regional Park

02 Boy Scouts of America Trail to Eagle – 12 p.m.

Trail to Eagle offers your Scouts a program that is different from the regular summer camp program. Some of the merit badges offered are Citizenship in the Community, Citizenship in the Nation, Citizenship in the World, Communications,

First Aid, Emergency Preparedness, Environmental Science, Swimming, Lifesaving, Astronomy and many more. This is not a shortcut to earn the Eagle Scout required merit badges; scouts will be given credit for the requirements they complete. Please come ready to learn and have lots of fun! *Park: Desert Outdoor Center at Lake Pleasant*

08 Make A Kids Hiking/Survival Pack – 10 a.m. We will show you some of the things a child should have with them when they hike so they will be safe. We will talk about why it's needed and show you some inexpensive ways to create the pack. You should never go out on even a short hike without these items. We will give you lots of tips about what is out there and what to do about it so you will stay safe as you explore nature. Meet at the air-conditioned, accessible Nature Center. *Park: Estrella Mountain Regional Park*

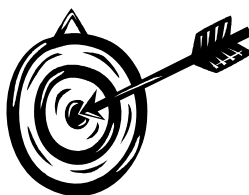
09 Desert Survival 101 – 10 a.m. Join us for a discussion of basic techniques for staying alive in the desert. We'll discuss safety, hydration, "staying found", orienting, venomous creatures, forest fire, etc. These are skills that could save your life one day. Meet at the air-conditioned, accessible Nature Center. *Park: Estrella Mountain Regional Park*

11 Boy Scouts of America Lake Pleasant Camp - Session 5 - 8:30 a.m. Where in the Valley of the Sun can you learn to canoe, kayak, row, motorboat, water ski, wake board, sail and fish all in one place? The Lake Pleasant Aquatics and Nature Camp, that's where! The Boy Scouts of America has teamed up with Maricopa County's Desert Outdoor Center to host an annual summer camp for boy scouts from all over the Phoenix- Metro Valley area.

It may be hot on land, but scouts can stay cool while they earn aquatic merit badges, some of which are not offered anywhere else in Arizona. When it's time to get off the lake, scouts can retreat from the blistering summer sun into an air-conditioned education center and continue to earn nature merit badges, such as Reptile & Amphibian Study, Insect Study, Environmental Study, Archeology, Geology, or even First Aid or Cooking!

This provisional day camp runs Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Cost for camp is \$215 per scout with bus pick-up available around the Valley for an additional fee. For more information, please call Natalie Harper at (602)372-7470 x209, or register online at www.grandcanyonbsa.com. *Park: Desert Outdoor Center at Lake Pleasant*

16 Introduction to Archery - 7:30 p.m. Interested in archery? Curious about how to shoot a bow? Come



to Usery Park and find out! You will discover how fun archery really is! Participants will experience a fun and safe introduction to recreational and international-style target

archery. Equipment will be provided. This program is open to anyone ages 8 and up. Minors must be accompanied by an adult. Advanced registration is required. Please call Ranger B at 480-984-0032 to register. Limited to 20 participants. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Meet at the Archery Range. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

25 Great American Backyard Campout – 3 p.m. Join REI and Lake Pleasant for a fun camping overnight!

Lake Pleasant and REI have partnered up on a full line-up of activities, food and fun! All you need to do is show up! Registration opens May 6th online at www.rei.com/paradisivalley and will close June 4th. Campers are encouraged to attend the pre-camp meet and greet at the REI Paradise Valley store on June 13th. Saturday night dinner, Sunday morning breakfast, park entry fees, campsite fees, and activities are ALL INCLUDED! However, if you wish to participate in the moonlight paddle on June 25th, you must provide your own watercraft. To rent a kayak, contact Scorpion Bay Marina at 928-501-7368 to reserve today! Questions about the event, contact Laura Carr at 602-996-5400 or email at lcarr@rei.com. Questions about Lake Pleasant, contact Anna Esh 602-372-7460 x 210 or email annaesh@mail.maricopa.gov *Park: Lake Pleasant Regional Park*

26 Great American Backyard Campout – 3 p.m. Join REI and Lake Pleasant for a fun camping overnight!

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Laura Carr at 602-996-5400 or email at lcarr@rei.com
Park: Lake Pleasant Regional Park

30 Desert Survival – 9 a.m. Join us for a discussion of basic techniques for staying alive in the desert. We'll discuss safety, hydration, "staying found", orienting, venomous creatures, etc. These are skills that could save your life one day. Meet at the Nature Center.
Park: Cave Creek Regional Park

AUGUST

06 Desert Survival – 3 p.m. Join us for a discussion of basic techniques for staying alive in the desert. We'll discuss safety, hydration, "staying found", orienting, venomous creatures, etc. These are skills that could save your life one day. Meet at the Nature Center.
Park: Cave Creek Regional Park

PLANTS

JUNE

22 Cool Cactus Walk – 8 a.m. What are the names of the cacti that grow in our desert? How do they survive (and thrive!) in such a harsh environment? Discover amazing facts about these incredible plants when you join our Interpretive Ranger, Ranger B, for a pleasant 1-hour stroll along the quarter-mile Desert Hawk Trail. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Location: Nature Center. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

All About Saguaros - "Brown-Bag It" with Ranger B – 12 p.m. Why do saguaros grow arms? How old do they get? What are the unique strategies they use to survive and thrive in our desert? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about saguaros, then this one-hour presentation is for you! Bring your sandwich to the "Brown-Bag It" series inside our Nature Center as Ranger B passionately shares his love for the "jolly green giant of the desert." Location: Nature Center. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

23 Summer Movie Day- "The Living Desert" – 10 a.m. Enjoy a cool escape from the heat of the desert inside our air conditioned visitor center and watch this exciting movie on our huge projector screen. But this is no ordinary movie theater. You are encouraged to bring snacks/lunch, pillows/blankets and make yourself

super comfy. Our resident animals love movie day and will be outstanding company as they watch the movie with you, from inside their enclosures of course. *Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park*

24 Discovering Desert Edibles Walk – 8 a.m. How have people survived off the land for thousands of years? Which desert plants are edible and when are they edible? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about desert edibles, then this walk is for you! Join Ranger B on this 1-mile/1-hour stroll along the Merkle Trail as he shares some useful facts about our edible desert plants. The Merkle Trail offers universal access and the hard-smooth surface of this trail will accommodate wheelchairs and strollers. Please bring



water. Location: Area 6. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

"Just for Kids" - Story Time in the Desert - 10:30 a.m. Kids (including parents and grandparents) will learn about our desert through fun stories, games, and a short nature walk. Feel free to bring a picnic lunch to enjoy after the program. Please bring water, hats, and closed-toe shoes. Location: Nature Center. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

Sunset Over Spur Cross – 6 p.m. Come with us on a casual stroll along the Metate Trail as the sun sets over the hills of the conservation area. The twilight is a prime time to watch for wildlife and take pictures so bring some binoculars and a camera. *Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area*

25 Edible Plants of Spur Cross – 7 a.m. June 25 Saturday 7:00 am Edible Plants of Spur Cross (easy) Which plants can you eat in the Sonoran Desert? Come join us as we look at the plants that have sustained the native peoples in this region for thousands of years. The hike will be on the Metate & Spur Cross Trails. Bring plenty of water. *Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area*

Digital Camera Scavenger Hunt – 8 a.m. Hey Dad, here's a chance to use your new cameras and the have fun with the whole family. Get a list of objects to photograph and the first one with photos of the complete list will win a choice of prizes. Posters for all participants. This will be fun for the whole family as everyone keeps their eyes open searching for the objects on the list. Follow signs to the shady Navy Area parking lot on the east side of the turf

area. You'll be done before it gets hot. NOTE: This program is part of the "County Parks are getting Wet 'n' Wild this summer" series and we will be raffling off a family-four pack at the end of the program. *Park: Estrella Mountain Regional Park*

29 Fruity Cactus Walk – 8 a.m. Which cactus fruit is edible and when? What food products are made from cactus fruit? How do you pick it and process it? Join Ranger B as he takes you on this exciting 1-mile/1-hour walk along the Merkle Trail as you learn some amazing facts about cactus fruit and also get to taste it as well! The Merkle Trail is barrier-free and offers universal access. The hard-smooth surface of this trail will accommodate wheelchairs and strollers. Please bring water and hats. Location: Area 6. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

30 Natural Healing, Desert Medicinals Walk – 8 a.m. We will take you on an easy walk around the Nature Center. Our desert is full of awesome healing plants! The Ranger will tell you about them, show you what they look like, where to find them, how to make herbal medicine and have some samples. Follow signs to air-conditioned Nature Center. (This hike is informational only. Consult a medical professional before using herbs.) *Park: Estrella Mountain Regional Park*

JULY

02 Upcoming Events in July
Fruits of the Desert – 7 p.m. Come join us on a quest to find and taste some of the edible plants that have sustained the native peoples of this region. We will harvest and taste one of the most important foods, the fruit of the saguaro cactus, as well as look to see what else is available this time of the year. Bring plenty of water. *Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area*

AZ Fauna & Flora Walk – 1 p.m. We will take you on a short walk around the Nature Center. You've got to be tough to survive in the desert and that applies to animals as well as plants. The Ranger will tell you about some of their clever adaptations and might have a few things to taste or smell. Follow signs to air-conditioned, accessible Nature Center. *Flora Park: Estrella Mountain Regional Park*

08 Fruits of the Desert – 7 a.m. Come join us on a quest to find and taste some of the edible plants that have sustained the native peoples of this region. We will harvest and taste one of the most important foods, the fruit of the

saguaro cactus, as well as look to see what else is available this time of the year. Bring plenty of water. *Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area*

09 Fruits of the Desert – 7 a.m. Come join us on a quest to find and taste some of the edible plants that have sustained the native peoples of this region. We will harvest and taste one of the most important foods, the fruit of the saguaro cactus, as well as look to see what else is available this time of the year. Bring plenty of water. *Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area*

16 Fruits of the Desert – 7 a.m. Come join us on a quest to find and taste some of the edible plants that have sustained the native peoples of this region. We will harvest and taste one of the most important foods, the fruit of the saguaro cactus, as well as look to see what else is available this time of the year. Bring plenty of water. *Park: Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area*

22 Saguaro Talk and Walk – 7 p.m. Why do saguaros grow arms? How old do they get? What are the special strategies they use to survive and thrive in our desert? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about saguaros, then this indoor presentation is for you! Following the indoor portion we will enjoy a short outdoor nature walk to view saguaros at night. Please bring flashlights and closed-toe shoes. Location: Nature Center. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*



29 Fruity Cactus Walk – 8 a.m. Which cactus fruit is edible and when? What food products are made from cactus fruit? How do you pick it and process it? Join Ranger B as he takes you on this exciting 1-mile/1-hour walk along the Merkle Trail as you learn some amazing facts about cactus fruit and also get to taste it as well! The Merkle Trail is barrier-free and offers universal access. The hard-smooth surface of this trail will accommodate wheelchairs and strollers. Please bring water. Location: Area 6. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

30 Desert Medicinals Walk With Professional Herbalist – 10 a.m. Professional herbalist Sara Tabner will talk about the plants inside before going for a short, easy walk around the air-conditioned Nature Center to identify the living plants with you. Our desert is full of awesome healing plants and she knows them all! Sara will tell you about them, show you what they look

like, where to find them, how to make herbal medicine and have some samples. Follow signs to Nature Center. This hike is somewhat accessible but does go over rough dirt terrain. (This hike is informational only. Consult a medical professional before using herbs.) *Park: Estrella Mountain Regional Park*

AUGUST

03 **Look At Me! I'm A Tree!-Estrella – 9 a.m.** Let's get the kids to imagine what it's like to be a tree as they learn about our green friends in a fun way. This is a game from "Last Child In The Woods" and will cure any lurking nature deficit disorder your kids might have! More nature = happier, smarter kids and Moms. Meet at the air-conditioned Nature Center. *Park: Estrella Mountain Regional Park*

10 **All About Saguaro - "Brown-Bag It" with Ranger B – 12 p.m.** Why do saguaros grow arms? How old do they get? What are the unique strategies they use to survive and thrive in our desert? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about saguaros, then this one-hour presentation is for you! Bring your sandwich to the "Brown-Bag It" series inside our Nature Center as Ranger B shares his love for the "jolly green giant of the desert." Location: Nature Center. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

18 **Discovering Desert Edibles Walk – 8 a.m.** How have people survived off the land for thousands of years? Which desert plants are edible and when are they edible? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about desert edibles, then this walk is for you! Join Ranger B on this pleasant one-hour/quarter-mile stroll along the Desert Hawk Trail as he shares some useful facts about our edible desert plants. Please bring water and closed-toe shoes. Location: Nature Center. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

20 **All About Cacti – 6 p.m.** Prickly, green, amazing, tasty, and evil, are all words that have been used to describe one most unique groups of plant on this planet, cacti. Join us at the nature center for a short talk to better understand these spiny treasures and find out why people are talking "All About Cacti." *Park: San Tan Mountain Regional Park*

31 **All About Desert Edibles - "Brown-Bag It" with Ranger B –**

12 p.m. How have people survived off the land for thousands of years? Which desert plants are edible and when are they edible? If you would like to know the answers to these questions, or any questions you may have about desert edibles, then this one-hour presentation is for you! Bring your sandwich to the "Brown-Bag It" series inside our Nature Center as Ranger B shares some helpful facts about the edible plants of our desert. Location: Nature Center. *Park: Usery Mountain Regional Park*

CONCESSIONAIRES

The Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department partners with private organizations to bring visitors various recreational activities. Below are the partners you may contact directly for more information:

Ball Fields

- Victory Lane Sports Complex – (623) 581-6000

Golf Courses

- The 500 Club – (623) 492-9500
- Tres Rios Golf Course at Estrella Mountain – (623) 932-3714

Horseback Riding

- Cave Creek and Estrella Mountain Horse Trailrides – (623) 742-6700

Marina

- Scorpion Bay Marina – (928) 501-2628
- Dillon's Restaurant – (928) 501-2227

Shooting Range

- Buckeye Hills Public Shooting Range – (623) 474-5004

Karting

- Phoenix Kart Racing Assoc. – (623) 551-2747
- Arizona Karting Association – (602) 919-9757

Paintball

- Fort Adobe Paintball Complex – (602) 493- 0318

Water Activities

- Wet 'n' Wild – Phoenix – (602) 201-2000

VOLUNTEERS & PARK HOSTS

The Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department would not be a reality without the contributed hours by this highly-prized group of individuals. Volunteers from around the Phoenix metropolitan area donate their time and energy in all of the parks at the contact stations, visitor centers, and campsites. Park hosts are another unique group of individuals who come to Phoenix from all over North America and donate thousands of hours a year to the Maricopa County Parks.

If you are only able to volunteer for a couple of hours at a time or serve as a Park Host for a full season, we welcome the opportunity to talk with you about how we can work together. For more information on the types of volunteer and hosting opportunities within the Department, **click here to review the Volunteer Handbook.**

For information on vacancies and opportunities in specific parks, please contact the park you're interested in at the numbers listed below:

- **Adobe Dam Regional Park.** The park is currently accepting applications for **summer hosts and volunteers.** Please phone 623.465.0431 for additional information.
- **Buckeye Hills Regional Park.** Please forward your resume to estrellapark@mail.maricopa.gov.
- **Cave Creek Regional Park.** The park is currently accepting applications for **summer hosts and volunteers.** Please phone 623.465.0431 for additional information.
- **Desert Outdoor Center at Lake Pleasant.** The park is currently accepting applications for **summer hosts and volunteers.** Please phone (602) 372-7460 for additional information.
- **Estrella Mountain Regional Park.** The park is currently accepting applications for **summer hosts and volunteers.** Please forward your resume to estrellapark@mail.maricopa.gov or call (623) 932-3811.
- **McDowell Mountain Regional Park.** The park is currently accepting applications for **summer hosts and volunteers.** For additional information, please contact the park at (480) 471-0173.
- **San Tan Mountain Regional Park.** The park is currently accepting applications for **summer hosts and volunteers.** Please forward your resume to santanpark@mail.maricopa.gov or contact (480) 655-5554 for additional information.
- **Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area.** At this time, we do not have host sites in the

conservation area. Please check back at a later date.

- **Usery Mountain Regional Park.** The park is currently accepting applications for **summer hosts and volunteers.** Please forward your resume to userypark@mail.maricopa.gov or contact (480) 984-0032 for additional information.
- **White Tank Mountain Regional Park.** The park is currently accepting applications for **summer hosts and volunteers.** Please forward your resume to whitetankpark@mail.maricopa.gov or contact (623) 935-2505 for additional information

How to Apply:

The Parks and Recreation Department is eager to provide you with the information that you need to make your experience with us a positive one. For additional information, call (602) 506.2930 or contact the park of your choice directly. If you are ready to join a truly special group, click on a button below to download an application!

PROTECT-A-PARK

It's time to get involved and give your land a hand! Maricopa County is proud to be home of one of the largest regional park systems in the United States.

The breathtaking flora and fauna and the vast array of interpretive programs rank these extraordinary parks among the most beautiful places in Arizona.

The Protect-A-Park program offers businesses, individuals, and clubs an opportunity to volunteer their time and skills to enhance a County park area that is near and dear to their heart.

Whether time is spent painting, repairing or simply picking up litter, together we can preserve this amazing park system for all to enjoy. Get involved and give your land a hand! Sign up to Protect-A-Park near you at...

- Cave Creek (623) 465-0431
- Desert Outdoor Center (602) 372-7470 ext. 200
- Estrella Mountain (623) 932-3811
- Lake Pleasant (602) 372-7460 ext. 200
- McDowell Mountain (480) 471-0173
- San Tan Mountain (480) 655-5554
- Spur Cross Ranch (480) 488-6601
- Usery Mountain (480) 984-0032
- White Tank (623) 935-2505